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A STUDY OF APPLIED MUSIC

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For a number of years the musical educators of the United States have been advocating the acceptance of the private study of piano and other instruments for public-school credit. That there is a substantial body of students who desire to pursue such a study has been for some time a well-known fact. The purpose of the present paper is to set forth the conditions, relative to home music study, in a typical New England town, suburban to Boston, and of a residential character. It is unlikely that the facts here collected will differ greatly from those collected in other communities. Such investigations as have been made have shown a very wide-spread study of the piano, violin, and other musical instruments during the early and late adolescent period.

The present inquiry was made in June, 1918 and 1919, in the senior and junior high schools of the town of Belmont, Massachusetts, a town with a population of 10,000, situated seven miles from Boston. A number of facts were sought, namely, what proportion of the pupils had at some time studied music privately, how many had discontinued, the reasons for such discontinuance, how many would continue if school credits were given for the work, how many and what kind of instruments were found in the homes, and what scholarship grades were secured by the students of music.

It was hoped that such an investigation would throw considerable light upon the general musical situation among school pupils and show the desirability of giving recognition, under proper restriction, to the outside study of piano, voice, violin and other orchestral instruments. The public school is not now equipped, and perhaps never will be, to give such individual instruction under its direct supervision during school hours.

A set of questions was presented simultaneously to both the schools mentioned and two sets of figures were obtained for two different years, 1918 and 1919. The great similarity in results makes it possible for us to deal for the most part, with one set, that

for the latest date, June, 1919. One comment might, however, be made in regard to that for June, 1918. While the number of students studying music was approximately the same for the two years, there was a marked increase in the number of musical instruments in the homes. The report for June, 1919, showed over a hundred more instruments in the homes than was the case in June, 1918. A consideration of trade conditions showed that there had been great activity in the sale of pianos and talking machines during that year.

The first table is very largely self-explanatory. It shows that 57.48 per cent of the senior high-school pupils and 48.16 per cent of the junior high-school pupils had at some time studied music at home.

TABLE I
NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THOSE STUDYING MUSIC AT SOME
TIME IN THEIR SCHOOL CAREER, JUNE, 1919

| | SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | | JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | |
|----------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Enrolment..... | 266 | 100.00 | 247 | 100.00 |
| Studying | | | | |
| Piano..... | 131 | 49.20 | 107 | 43.30 |
| Violin..... | 8 | 3.02 | 7 | 2.83 |
| Fife..... | 3 | 1.13 | 1 | 0.41 |
| Voice..... | 5 | 1.88 | 3 | 1.21 |
| Trombone..... | | | 1 | 0.41 |
| Flute..... | 2 | 0.75 | ..... | ..... |
| Bugle..... | 2 | 0.75 | ..... | ..... |
| Drum..... | 2 | 0.75 | ..... | ..... |
| Totals..... | 153 | 57.48 | 119 | 48.16 |

Figures for other years and other communities might show a larger variety of instruments used in the lessons. The presence of a good teacher or performer in town is a great stimulus to latent talent.

The next table deals with the distribution of reasons given for dropping the study. Occasionally more than one reason was given. In estimating the percentage of those who dropped the work, therefore, a reduction is made at the end of the table for the purpose of correction. It is probably a coincidence that the number dropping lessons because of school work was 54 in the senior high school in both years, and likewise in the junior high school the number was

2 in both years. There was considerable fluctuation in the other reasons given as shown by the two years' study. Very few gave lack of funds as the reason.

TABLE II
REASONS WHY PUPILS DROPPED MUSIC STUDY

| | SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | | JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Total studying..... | 153 | 100.00 | 107 | 100.00 |
| School studies..... | 54 | 35.30 | 2 | 1.87 |
| Dislike..... | 14 | 9.15 | 6 | 5.10 |
| Afternoon work..... | 4 | 2.62 | 1 | 0.93 |
| Proficient enough..... | 2 | 1.31 | ..... | ..... |
| Lack of funds..... | 3 | 1.96 | ..... | ..... |
| Moving..... | 9 | 5.88 | 3 | 2.78 |
| Loss of teacher..... | 1 | 0.65 | 1 | 0.93 |
| Ill health..... | 4 | 2.62 | 4 | 3.74 |
| Other reasons..... | 2 | 1.31 | 4 | 3.74 |
| Totals..... | 93 | ..... | 21 | ..... |
| Less duplications..... | 11 | ..... | 1 | ..... |
| Net..... | 82 | 60.80 | 20 | 19.09 |

An inspection of the table shows that the regular high-school work made it necessary in a large number of cases to discontinue the study of music privately. Very often preparation for college was an added factor. That a substantial number of those who had to drop the subject would continue if school credit were given therefor was shown by the fact that 21 in the senior high school and 9 in the junior high school expressed a desire to take the work under those conditions. This, in the senior high school, is slightly over 25 per cent of those who discontinued.

A further analysis of the returns will show the effect of the increasing severity of the school work as it is reflected in the larger percentages of the upper classes who have had to give up this outside work. The amount of time given to lessons and practice though showing a wide range, from one-half an hour per week to fifteen hours a week (three hours a day), brought remarkably close averages whether computed by classes or for the total number studying. These averages for the senior high-school pupils were for 1918, 5.68 hours per week, and for 1919, 5.79 hours per week. This compares

very closely with the time that should be spent on regular school subjects.

In Table III are given the enrolment of the classes, the percentage of the class that has studied music privately, and the percentage of those who, having begun the study, dropped it previous to the time of this investigation.

TABLE III
EFFECT OF SENIOR HIGH-SCHOOL WORK UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF PRIVATE MUSIC STUDY, JUNE, 1918, 1919

| Year | Total in Class | Percentage Studied | Percentage Discontinued |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1918 | | | |
| Senior..... | 44 | 45.5 | 80.0 |
| Junior..... | 50 | 52.0 | 71.1 |
| Sophomore..... | 53 | 45.3 | 50.0 |
| Freshman..... | 83 | 59.1 | 55.0 |
| School..... | 230 | 51.8 | 61.3 |
| 1919 | | | |
| Senior..... | 47 | 55.2 | 81.8 |
| Junior..... | 46 | 34.8 | 37.5 |
| Sophomore..... | 78 | 64.0 | 54.0 |
| Freshman..... | 95 | 64.2 | 45.9 |
| School..... | 266 | 57.5 | 60.8 |

It is evident from these figures, which would be doubtless more consistent if larger numbers had been available, that, on the average, the older classes in school find it more difficult to keep up their home work in music with their other school studies. As seen in Table II, this condition of affairs does not affect the junior high-school student; he still has time to spare for the subject, and the natural laws of like and dislike of the subject or teacher, play the most important part in dropping the subject during those years.

In order to determine whether the pupils of the senior high school who studied music in addition to their other school work were of the better or poorer class of scholars, a study of their ranks was undertaken. The results are collected in Table IV and show that this group of students is equal to the average in most cases, and above the average in others.

TABLE IV
SCHOLARSHIP AVERAGES OF MUSIC STUDENTS IN THE SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL, BASED ON 100 AS A PERFECT MARK

| | 1918 | 1919 |
|---|-------|-------|
| All students of music | 80.83 | 82.16 |
| Those who dropped on account of school studies..... | 81.65 | 82.09 |
| Those who dropped on account of other reasons..... | 78.97 | 78.22 |
| Those who continued music in the high school..... | 79.26 | 82.62 |
| Scholarship average of the school. | 80.56 | 79.10 |

It is very apparent that the serious-minded music student was (with the possible exception of one group) above the average in industry and accomplishment. The pupil who wishes to pursue this subject seriously is therefore entitled to the consideration of the school authorities.

The question of the relative interest of boys and girls in the study of music was noted and set forth in tabular form in Table V.

TABLE V
MORTALITY OF THE MUSIC STUDENT ACCORDING TO SEX

| | SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | | | | JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------|-------|--------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| | 1918 | | 1919 | | June, 1919 | | September, 1919 | |
| | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls |
| Total taking lessons.... | 32 | 87 | 39 | 114 | 35 | 85 | 38 | 82 |
| Continued..... | 16 | 34 | 21 | 50 | 28 | 72 | 27 | 58 |
| Percentage continued .. | 50 | 39.2 | 53.9 | 43.8 | 80 | 84.75 | 71 | 70.9 |

As a rule the boys stuck to their music lessons better than did the girls, though a relatively larger number of girls studied the subject.

The pupils were also asked concerning the musical instruments owned at home in order to determine the influence that music might have in their daily life. The returns were somewhat surprising. While only the results for the year 1919 are appended, it is interesting to note that there was apparently a wide-spread purchasing of instruments during the year 1918-19. As has been already stated there was a difference of 100 instruments in the homes of the senior high-school pupils as shown by the two reports. The difference in enrolment for the two years would not account for so large an

increase in numbers. There were nineteen different kinds of instruments reported and many homes contained more than one instrument; the highest number being thirteen. The proportion of homes having one or more instruments was nearly 90 per cent. Such a wide-spread distribution shows that here is a large field of education almost untouched by the public schools. Instruction in many of these instruments could very readily be undertaken by classroom instruction as has already been done in some communities. The opportunity for a large orchestra, if properly stimulated, is apparent. The investment has already been made and the actual

TABLE VI
INSTRUMENTS FOUND IN THE HOMES OF THE PUPILS, JUNE, 1919

| | Senior High School | Junior High School |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| School enrolment..... | 266 | 247 |
| Piano..... | 176 | 181 |
| Phonograph..... | 82 | 116 |
| Violin..... | 37 | 39 |
| Drum..... | 8 | 7 |
| Flute..... | 8 | 2 |
| Banjo..... | 8 | 7 |
| Organ..... | 7 | 2 |
| Ukelele..... | 6 | 6 |
| Mandolin..... | 5 | 16 |
| Bugle..... | 5 | 4 |
| Cornet..... | 3 | 10 |
| Autoharp..... | 1 | ..... |
| Harp..... | ..... | 1 |
| Accordion..... | 1 | ..... |
| Guitar..... | 3 | 5 |
| Clarinet..... | ..... | 1 |
| Piccolo..... | 1 | 3 |
| Fife..... | 1 | 3 |
| Trombone..... | ..... | 3 |
| Total..... | 352 | 406 |

cost to the public school system would not be large. The prevalence of music in the homes of the people points clearly to the desirability of greater recognition. There is no subject that might be taught in the schools that would have so wide an influence and value for the hours of leisure and relaxation that are apparently coming in larger measure to the worker of the future and to the public generally.

Table VI shows an average of 1.3 for the senior and 1.6 instruments for the junior high school; 66.1 per cent of the homes of the senior high-school pupils and 73.2 per cent of the homes of the

junior high-school pupils contained pianos. The large number of orchestral instruments is also worthy of note.

In Table VII we classify the homes according to the number of instruments in each. This will prove surprising to one with no preconceived notions about the subject.

TABLE VII
DISTRIBUTION OF INSTRUMENTS IN THE HOMES, JUNE, 1919

| Number | Senior High School | Junior High School |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| One..... | 75 | 82 |
| Two..... | 80 | 75 |
| Three..... | 26 | 42 |
| Four..... | 10 | 14 |
| Five..... | 2 | 2 |
| Six..... | 2 | ..... |
| Thirteen..... | 1 | ..... |
| Total..... | 196 | 215 |
| Percentage of school. | 89 | 87 |

THE PRESENT SITUATION IN PUBLIC-SCHOOL MUSICAL INSTRUCTION

We are obliged to confess that, with the exception of a very few communities in the United States, music instruction in the public schools of the country is very inadequate. It does not in any sense measure up to the great importance of the subject.

About 30 per cent of the schools have choral work, either compulsory or elective. Only a few give opportunity for more advanced choral or solo work to the musically gifted pupils. Many schools of an enrolment of two hundred or over have orchestras and in some cases give credit for the work therein. They have in very few cases used these orchestras in such a way as to arouse the latent talent of the school to its utmost. The study of harmony and musical appreciation has made some headway. A census of the metropolitan district of Boston showed on November, 1919, that 21.7 per cent (or 7 out of 32) of the cities and towns were giving courses in this subject.

The private study of music, which is the main theme of this paper, has also received recognition in the towns and cities mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Among other large cities and towns of the country that have adopted the full musical program we are considering are San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley, Califor-

nia, Cincinnati, Ohio, Duluth, Minnesota, Indianapolis, Indiana, St. Louis, Missouri, Schenectady, New York, Yonkers, New York, New Britain, Connecticut, Nashua, New Hampshire, Rutland, Vermont.

So far as we can ascertain, the vast majority of the communities of the land give little or no consideration to the possibility of utilizing the latent musical forces of the home and community and hence neglect a most important field of education.

THE PROGRAM PROPOSED

To those already familiar with the report on the subject of music of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education appointed by the National Education Association and printed by the United States Bureau of Education as Bulletin No. 49, 1917, the following outline will not be new.

The investigation into the condition of home music in the high schools of Belmont was undertaken without reference to this report. While it is local in its scope, it points to a state of affairs of which most principals are well aware. One of the former principals of a high school suburban to Boston, a man well known throughout the country, once said that the musically gifted pupil who wishes to pursue music as a serious study never completes the high-school course because music has no adequate place in the public high school. He must leave if he wishes to put the time and effort into his chosen subject that are required for proficiency and success and thus lose the advantage of general high-school training.

The program suggested in the report referred to above includes (1) chorus singing, properly graded and classified; (2) orchestral work; (3) glee clubs; (4) appreciation of music; (5) theory of music; (6) applied music, or school credit for outside work.

Space does not permit a full consideration of these subdivisions of the work in music. The reader is referred to the report mentioned for a full presentation of the methods to be used. Our purpose is to call attention again to the subject and to present reasons for its adoption.

THE EDUCATIVE VALUE OF MUSIC

The prime motives in musical education are appreciation of good music and the development of the power of musical expression. In these respects it is similar to the training in English. That a

finer appreciation of music is greatly needed scarcely demands proof. Never have we seen a time when music has been commercialized to such an extent as at present; as a result, never have we seen a time when musical taste has been depraved on such a vast scale as at present. The "jazz" and the rag-time are the "dime-novels" of music. We frown on cheap literature and tolerate cheap music. Professor Inglis, in his book on *Principles of Secondary Education*, well says:

the skeptic concerning the important part played by the aesthetic arts in modern life may well consider the erotic and dithyrambic music and song which attracts the secondary pupil and others, the character of modern dancing . . . , the character of the popular "musical comedy."

The home, even the church, do not cast their influence for the best in music. Indifference towards the whole situation marks our attitude. The schools have demonstrated that in many fields their influence counts; many reforms of the past can be traced to the proper utilization of its organized forces; many proposed reforms for the future are planned and already adopted as part of the program of education. We can greatly modify the musical tone of the community if we are determined to do so.

If training for a vocation has a place in the public school, the music student may often claim a right to a hearing. The pursuit of music for monetary ends many times is the result of activity in some school or college musical club. Most of the church music of today and a large part of entertainment and concert work is carried on by people who do not make a livelihood thereby, but who seek in this avocation pleasure and incidental profit. A large part of the revenue of the best music teachers, vocal and instrumental, is consequently drawn from this source. Most of our local bands, local orchestras, and male quartets are made up of semi-professionals who were stimulated to undertake their work by an early beginning in school.

Many more, thousands more, never seek to use their musical training in public performances, but do secure a fund of recreation and pleasure for themselves and their immediate families in the home circle. The influence of music in holding the young to the home during the period of adolescence, its place in giving vent to wholesome emotion during that time, can perhaps not be accurately determined or stated, but we all know it to be considerable.

If one of the objects of training be the securing of accuracy of thought and action, the proper regulation of music teaching and the setting up of high standards is important. The acceptance of private study by the schools would secure a standardization of private music instruction which no other agency could accomplish. At present it is easy for one to advertise as a teacher of music. No questions are asked concerning the experience or training of such instructors. The public has little opportunity to study or investigate their qualifications. The public school, even without certifying the worthy teachers, would greatly strengthen them by its requirements and would in time make it impossible or unprofitable for a poorly trained or inefficient teacher to do business.

That the study of music, whether in the form of private instrumental or vocal lessons or in the form of harmony and other branches of theory, is a subject of worthy endeavor is evinced by the attitude of the colleges. In the report on College Entrance Requirements, compiled by Clarence D. Kingsley, and published by the United States Bureau of Education as Bulletin No. 7, 1913, we find that 84 colleges and engineering schools in the country give admission credit for music, theoretical or applied, i.e., private musical study. The New England colleges on this list are Boston University, Clark College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, Tufts College, Wellesley College. Outside of New England some of the well-known institutions on the list are Columbia, University of California, Leland Stanford University, Colgate, and most state universities. Harvard and Radcliffe have for many years given credit for advanced standing to pupils who have been able to pass tests in harmony and counterpoint. Harmony and counterpoint are accepted by the College Entrance Examination Board and until recently examinations were given in voice, piano, and violin. The reason the latter tests were taken off the list is doubtless that there have been almost no candidates that offered themselves. This does not mean that the subject is unworthy. The high schools have not given their pupils an opportunity to continue this private study and thus secure the degree of skill that should be required if it is to be accepted as a college entrance requirement. In other lines the high-school men have sought liberality and freedom of election and content of subject. In this field they have not understood the possibilities and have consequently remained indifferent.

From the time of the early Greek education to the present music has had a part in education. It was one of the two great subjects in the Grecian school; it was interpreted broadly and included much that we now have in a liberal education. The subject was later one of the exact studies included in the quadrivium of the mediaeval schools, the others being arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. Music has grown with the ages and is today one of the most exacting of the arts and sciences. Its thorough mastery requires a sense training surpassed by none and an intellectual capacity worthy of a mathematician.

Its place in modern education has been well expressed by Charles W. Eliot in his noteworthy paper, "Changes Needed in American Secondary Education." He says:

By many teachers and educational administrators music and drawing are still regarded as fads or trivial accomplishments not worthy to rank as substantial educational material; whereas, they are important features in the outfit of every human being who means to be cultivated, efficient and rationally happy. In consequence, many native Americans have grown up without the high capacity for enjoyment, and for giving joy, which even a moderate acquaintance with these arts imparts. This is a disaster which has much diminished the happiness of the native American stock. It is high time that the American school—urban or rural, mechanical, commercial, or classical, public, private, or endowed—set earnestly to work to repair this great loss and damage.

In the reorganization of secondary education that is inevitable if we are to bring our schools into contact with modern life, all forms of instruction in music, including the careful study of voice and instruments, must take their proper place in the school program. Music must minister to the leisure, the vocation, and the avocations of the people. The public school must offer the opportunity for the musically minded to secure a well-rounded and liberal education. We must take away the reproach we have been casting upon musicians that they are narrowly trained and interested in little but their own profession.

It will be the pride of the school organization of the future that it can take advantage of all the educational agencies of the community and fuse them into a common purpose—the purpose of giving every boy and girl full opportunity to develop all their abilities to the utmost.